

PCSN SCHEME DOCUMENT

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PEFC Certification System Netherlands - Certification Procedures

PEFC Netherlands

Postbus 186
3990 DD Houten
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 30 693 0040
Fax: +31 30 692 5045
E-mail: info@pefcnederland.nl
Web: www.pefcnederland.nl



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1 Scope

This document was adopted by the General Assembly of PEFC Netherlands on 24 November 2011.

This document is part of the PEFC Certification System Netherlands.

This document specifies the obligations, responsibilities, competences and tasks of auditors and certification bodies carrying out forest management and chain of custody certification. It also specifies the procedures for certification and accreditation.

2 Definitions

Definitions are listed in PCSN Scheme Document *PCSN VIII Scheme Description*.

3 Competence of certification bodies

3.1 Accreditation

Certification bodies carrying out forest management and/or chain of custody certification shall have a valid accreditation issued by a national accreditation body.

The accreditation shall be issued by an accreditation body that is a member of the European cooperation for Accreditation (EA) and/or the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and that works according procedures in ISO/IEC 17011:2004 and other documents recognized by the above organizations.

The scope of the accreditation of certification bodies carrying out forest management certification shall state "*PEFC Standard Netherlands*".

The scope of the accreditation of certification bodies carrying out chain of custody certification shall state "*PEFC ST 2002:2010 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements*".

Any issued, accredited forest management or chain of custody certificate shall bear the relevant accreditation symbol.

3.2 Forest Management Certification

The PEFC certification of forest management shall be carried out by impartial, independent third parties, that cannot be involved in the forest management, or in the standard setting process as standard setting body and are independent of the certified entity.

The certification body shall:

- 1) fulfill the requirements defined in ISO 17021,

- 2) have technical competence in the field of forest management and its economic, environmental and social impact,
- 3) have a good understanding on the *PEFC Standard Netherlands*, on which the forest certification is based,
- 4) have internal procedures for forest management certification according to ISO 19011 and ISO 17021,
- 5) appoint competent auditors.

Compliance of the certification body with the above requirements shall be verified with an accreditation

3.3 Chain of Custody Certification

The PEFC certification of chain of custody shall be carried out by impartial, independent third parties, that cannot be involved in the forest management, or in the standard setting process as standard setting body and are independent of the certified entity.

The certification body shall:

- 1) fulfill the requirements defined in ISO Guide 65 (EN 45011),
- 2) have technical competence in forest based procurement and processing, material flows in different stages of processing and trade,
- 3) have a good understanding on *PEFC ST 2002:2010 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products - Requirements* on which the forest certification is based,
- 4) have internal procedures for chain of custody certification according to ISO 19011 and ISO Guide 65 (EN 45011),
- 5) appoint competent auditors.

Compliance of the certification body with the above requirements shall be verified with an accreditation

3.4 Notification

Certification bodies shall be notified by PEFC Netherlands. The procedure for notification is stated in *PEFC Notification of Certification Bodies operating Certification in The Netherlands*.

4 Competence of auditors

4.1 Forest Management Certification

The auditor:

- 1) shall fulfill the general criteria as defined in ISO 19011,
- 2) that carries out the field/on-site inspections in the forest shall have a MSc/BSc degree in the field of forestry and/or sufficient professional experience in this field. This auditor is fluent in Dutch and English,
- 3) has a good understanding of forest management practices in The Netherlands, applicable laws and regulations and the *PEFC Standard Netherlands*.

The certification body can fulfill the technical competence defined for auditors by the presence of a technical expert(s) in a group of auditors carrying out forest management audits.

4.2 Chain of Custody Certification

The auditor:

- 1) shall fulfill the general criteria as defined in ISO 19011,
- 2) shall have, through appropriate education and/or professional experience, adequate know-how on procurement, material flows, processing and trade in the timber and paper processing industry.
- 3) is fluent in English and Dutch
- 4) has a good understanding of *PEFC ST 2002:2010 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements*.

The certification body can fulfill the technical competence defined for auditors by the presence of a technical expert(s) in a group of auditors carrying out forest management audits.

5 Certification process

5.1 Phases in the certification process

The process of certification consists of the following steps:

- 1) Application of the applicant at the certification body
- 2) Assessment of the application and data submitted beforehand by the certification body
- 3) Voluntary pre-audit
- 4) Certification audit
- 5) Assessment and decision by the certification body
- 6) Control audits

The applicant shall submit at least the following to the certification body: general details of the applicant and, if applicable, a complete list of all participants in multisite or group certification.

The applicant shall comply with the *PEFC Standard Netherlands* and/or *PEFC ST 2002:2010 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements* before submitting the application. The purpose of submitting data beforehand and the voluntary pre-audit is to guarantee that the above mentioned standards have been implemented in the correct way by the applicant.

5.2 Audits

The applicant defines the objective of the audit. The scope of the audit is determined by the lead auditor in such a way that the objective of the audit is met. The purpose of the audit is to verify if the data collected by the auditor is in compliance with the requirements in the appropriate standard.

The requirements for the forest management audit are in the *PEFC Standard Netherlands*. The requirements for the chain of custody audit are in the *PEFC ST 2002:2010 Chain of Custody of Forest Based Products – Requirements*. The requirements in *PEFC ST 2001:2008 v2* also applies in case the certified entity has a PEFC logo license in category B or C according to *PEFC ST 2001:2008 v2*. The applicant can define additional requirements if needed.

The objective, scope and requirements shall be establish in an audit plan. The audit plan also consists of a time planning and additional information, necessary for the preparation by the applicant.

The audit shall be carried out by an audit team. Besides the lead auditor the team shall have an adequate number of auditors or technical experts. The audit team shall be appointed by the certification body.

The audit consists of the following phases:

- 1) Initial visit
- 2) Collecting of audit data
- 3) Assessment of audit data
- 4) Final visit and audit report on conformity

The audit team collects the data on which the conformity with the standard shall be assessed. If needed the audit team can use information issued by other parties (e.g. NGO's, surrounding community, government).

The results of the audit and the data collection are presented to the applicant during the final visit. The certification body writes an audit report that contains at least the identified nonconformities.

The certification body also writes a summary of the audit report with the findings on the conformity with the appropriate standard. This summary shall be made public by PEFC Netherlands.

5.3 Certification decision

5.3.1 Judgment by the certification body

The certification decision shall made by the certification body based on the audit report. The decision can be positive, conditional or negative.

A positive decision leads to immediate certification and issue of the certificate. A conditional or negative decision is the result of nonconformities with the requirements. A conditional decision demands making a plan of corrective actions to lift the nonconformities within a certain timeframe. When this plan is approved by the certification body the certificate can be issued under conditions.

5.3.2 Nonconformities and corrective actions

Any nonconformities with the certification requirements shall always lead to corrective actions and possible refusal, suspension or withdrawing of the certificate. There are two categories of nonconformities: minor and major. Minor nonconformities do not necessarily withhold certification. In case of major non-conformities certification is always impossible.

Multisite and group certification has two additional types of non-conformity: at group level and at participant level. A nonconformity at participant level can lead to exclusion of the concerning participant. This shall be decided by the group manager/central office.

5.3.3 Follow up and surveillance audits

When the certification decision is negative the certification body can carry out a follow up audit to check if corrective actions have been taken. The certificate can be issued when the corrective actions have been implemented adequately.

Surveillance audits shall be carried out at least once a year during the validity of the certificate. The scope of a surveillance audit can be limited compared to the certification audit.

The surveillance audit shall check whether corrective actions have been implemented and are resolved. The surveillance audit can be limited to certain parts of the certification requirements.

5.3.4 Revision

When the requirements of the appropriate standard are revised, the requirements at the time of the certification audit will apply to the certified entity. The certified entity has a transition period of one year to adapt his management to the new requirements

Validity of the certificate

The certificate is valid for five years or less. The certification body is allowed to permanently withdraw or temporarily suspend the certification during the validity. The decision on withdrawal or suspension shall be communicated to the certified entity by written motivation. To extend the validity of the certificate the certification body shall carry out a re-certification audit after five years.

The certified entity can withdraw the certificate at any point during its validity. The withdrawal shall come into effect immediately after the certified entity has informed the certification thereof in writing.

5.3.5 Information on certificates

The certification body supplies to PEFC Netherlands all details on all issued forest management and chain of custody certificates and any changes in the validity and scope of these certificates.

5.3.6 Complaints procedure

The certification body shall have a documented complaints procedure for the handling of complaints and disputes between applicants/certified entities and the certification body.